

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 15, 24 and 38 to read as follows. Note that all claims currently pending in this application, including those presently being amended, have been reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience. A marked-up copy showing the changes made to the claims is attached as an appendix.

1. (Amended) A method of creating a virtual print market place over a network comprising:

collecting market information, the market information comprising an identity of service providers and the print services and pricing provided by each of the service providers;

obtaining criteria established by an interactive shop for selecting service providers to provide the print services offered to patrons of the interactive shop; and

selecting one or more service providers identified in the market information to provide the set of print services based on the criteria and the market information,

wherein the selection of the service providers is performed by other than the interactive shop.

2. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the method further comprising:

forwarding an order for services placed in the interactive shop to at least one of the selected service providers via a market portal.

3. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 2, further comprising:

transmitting digital data from the interactive shop to the at least one of the selected service providers via another communication channel that excludes the market portal.

4. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

updating the market information to reflect amount, type and price of print services ordered in an interactive shop from a service provider.

5. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

updating the market information to reflect level of satisfaction associated with a service provider.

6. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:

forwarding an order from the interactive shop to at least one of the selected service providers via a market portal;

transmitting a status of the order to the market portal; and

rendering payment when the market portal determines that the ordered print services have been provided.

7. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 6, the step of rendering payment further comprising:

collecting fees from a patron of the interactive shop that placed the order;

and

rendering payment to the one of the selected service providers from the collected fees.

8. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 6 further comprising:

rendering a percentage of the fees collected from the patron as payment to the interactive shop.

9. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 6 further comprising:

rendering a percentage of the fees collected from the patron as payment to the provider providing the market portal.

10. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of selecting service providers is performed in anticipation of the placement of an order for print services.

11. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of selecting service providers is performed in response to the placement of an order for print services.

12. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

establishing a relationship between the interactive shop and a selected service provider guaranteeing the purchase and supply respectively of a certain quantity of a given service; and

updating the market information to specify the quantity of the given service guaranteed.

13. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 12 further comprising:

updating the quantity to reflect filled orders of the print services.

14. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the market information includes an identity of interactive shops.

15. (Amended) A method of creating a virtual print market place over a network comprising:

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collecting market information, the market information comprising an identity of service providers, interactive shops, a standardized set of print services and pricing provided by each of the service providers;

obtaining a bid from a service provider identifying a print service and terms for providing the print service;

obtaining a bid from an interactive shop identifying the print service and terms for purchasing the print service; [and]

determining compatibility between the service provider and the interactive shop; and

establishing an agreement between the service provider and the interactive shop when the terms of the print service and the interactive shop are compatible, wherein the service provider agrees to provide and the interactive shop agrees to purchase the service according to the terms, and

wherein the determination is made by other than the service provider and the interactive shop.

16. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 15 wherein the terms include a price and quantity of the print service.

17. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 15 wherein the terms include a duration.

18. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 15 further comprising:

an obtaining step to obtain a bid from at least one other service provider to assume a portion of the service provider's agreement with the interactive shop; and

an establishing step to establish a new agreement between the at least one other service provider and the interactive shop.

19. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 18 wherein the portion of the agreement represents any remaining quantity of print services not already provided by the service provider.

20. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 18 wherein the portion of the agreement represents less than all of the remaining quantity of print services not already provided by the service provider.

21. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 15 further comprising:

an obtaining step to obtain a bid from at least one other interactive shop to assume a portion of the interactive shop's agreement with the service provider; and

an establishing step to establish a new agreement between the at least one other interactive shop and the service provider.

22. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the portion of the agreement represents any remaining quantity of print services not already purchased by the interactive shop.

23. (Unamended From Previous Version) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the portion of the agreement represents less than all of the remaining quantity of print services not already purchased by the interactive shop.

24. (Amended) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps to create a virtual print market place over a network, the steps comprising.

A3 a collecting step to collect market information, the market information comprising an identity of service providers and the print services and pricing provided by each of the service providers;

an obtaining step to obtain criteria established by an interactive shop for selecting service providers to provide print services offered to patrons of the interactive shop; and

a selecting step to select one or more service providers identified in the market information to provide the set of print services based on the criteria and the market information,

wherein the selection of the service providers is performed by other than the interactive shop.

25. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24, wherein an order is placed in the interactive shop, further comprising:

a forwarding step to forward an order placed in the interactive shop to at least one of the selected service providers via a market portal.

26. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 25, further comprising:

a transmitting step to transmit digital data from the interactive shop to the at least one of the selected service providers via another communication channel that excludes the market portal.

27. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24, further comprising:

an updating step to update the market information to reflect amount, type and price of print services ordered in an interactive shop from a service provider.

28. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according Claim 24, further comprising:

an updating step to update the market information to reflect level of satisfaction associated with a service provider.

29. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24 further comprising:

a forwarding step to forward an order from the interactive shop to at least one of the selected service providers via a market portal;

a transmitting step to transmit a status of the order to the market portal; and

a rendering step to render payment when the market portal determines that the ordered print services have been provided.

30. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 29, further comprising:

a collecting step to collect fees from a patron of the interactive shop that placed the order; and

a rendering step to render payment to the one of the selected service providers from the collected fees.

31. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according Claim 29 further comprising:

rendering step to render a percentage of the fees collected from the patron as payment to the interactive shop.

32. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 29 further comprising:

a rendering step to render a percentage of the fees collected from the patron as payment to the provider providing the market portal.

33. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24 wherein the step of selecting service providers is performed in anticipation of the placement of an order for print services.

34. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24 wherein the step of selecting service providers is performed in response to the placement of an order for print services.

35. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24, further comprising:

an establishing step to establish a relationship between the interactive shop and a selected service provider guaranteeing the purchase and supply respectively of a certain quantity of a given print service; and

an updating step to update the market information to specify the quantity of the given print service guaranteed.

36. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 35 further comprising:

an updating step to update the quantity to reflect filled orders of the print services.

37. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 24 wherein the market information includes an identity of interactive shops.

38. (Amended) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps to create a virtual print market place over a network, the steps comprising:

A4 a collecting step to collect market information, the market information comprising an identity of service providers, interactive shops, a standardized set of print services and pricing provided by each of the service providers;

an obtaining step to obtain a supply bid from a service provider identifying a print service and terms for providing the print service;

an obtaining step to obtain a purchase bid from an interactive shop identifying the print service and terms for purchasing the print service;

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a determining step to determine compatibility between the service provider and the interactive shop; and

an establishing step to establish an agreement between the service provider and the interactive shop when the terms of the print service and the interactive shop are compatible, wherein the service provider agrees to provide and the interactive shop agrees to purchase the print service according to the terms, and

wherein the print service is offered by the interactive shop for purchase by a patron of the interactive shop.

39. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 38 wherein the terms include a price and quantity of the print service.

40. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 38 wherein the terms include a duration.

41. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 38 further comprising:

an obtaining step to obtain a bid from at least one other service provider to assume a portion of the service provider's agreement with the interactive shop; and

an establishing step to establish a new agreement between the at least one other service provider and the interactive shop.

42. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 41 wherein the portion of the agreement represents any remaining quantity of print service not already provided by the service provider.

43. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 41 wherein the portion of the agreement represents less than all of the remaining quantity of print service not already provided by the service provider.

44. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 38 further comprising:

an obtaining step to obtain a bid from at least one other interactive shop to assume a portion of the interactive shop's agreement with the service provider; and

an establishing step to establish a new agreement between the at least one other interactive shop and the service provider.

45. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 44 wherein the portion of the agreement represents any remaining quantity of print service not already purchased by the interactive shop.

46. (Unamended From Previous Version) A computer-readable memory medium storing computer-executable process steps according to Claim 44 wherein the portion of the agreement represents less than all of the remaining quantity of print service not already purchased by the interactive shop.